

NEURO-SPRINT CALL FOR PARTICIPATION IA AND NEUROSCIENCE CLUSTER

CONTEXT

With the support of the Canada First Research Excellence Fund to develop Robust, Reasoning and Responsible Artificial Intelligence (R³AI), IVADO has established 10 Clusters, whose function is to deploy and implement cross-sectoral scientific programming in selected domains to achieve the R³AI vision.

As part of the first round of funding of IVADO's Research Clusters, a call for external proposals aimed at funding innovative projects that complement their research programs must be organised by each cluster. The research program of the AI and Neurosciences Cluster (R1) seeks to **develop and implement a multimodal foundational model for neuroscience**. Consequently, this call for proposals aims to fund research projects developing or integrating artificial intelligence tools in the fields of basic or clinical neuroscience.

OBJECTIVES

The **Neuro-Sprint** call offers short-term funding to support initiatives aimed at developing, evaluating, and applying foundational models in neuroscience. Submitted projects must align with the R1's research program through one of the following objectives:

- Building tokenization modules for ingesting various types of neuroscience data
- Creating modules for processing stimuli and behaviors
- Developing datasets, including simulated datasets, for validating pre-trained models
- Preprocessing multimodal datasets that can be used for training or validating foundational models.

Any other valid contribution linked directly to the development of foundational models for neuroscience will be considered.

FINANCEMENT

A maximum of 5 projects will be funded under this call for proposals, and the selected projects will receive between \$20,000 and \$25,000. This grant is non-renewable and must be **spent by March 31, 2027**.

At least 80% of the budgets must be allocated to salaries (research professionals, students, or postdocs).

IMPORTANT DATES

- Application deadline: October 9, 2026 11h59 PM
- Results notification: week of October 19, 2026
- Project start date: as soon as possible
- Project end date : March 31, 2027

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The Principal Investigator must:

- Be a professor at a university in Québec
- Not be a member of R1 (members of other IVADO research clusters are eligible)
- Be sponsored by a [R1 Investigator*](#) (see Appendix 1).

R1 investigators must accept and confirm their sponsorship prior to the submission of an application. Each R1 researcher may sponsor up to **two proposals and must complete the sponsorship form—separately from the application submitted by the candidate—before the submission deadline (October 9, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.). The R1 researcher's participation in the project must be clearly described in the application. Please note that R1 researchers are not eligible to receive funding under this call for proposals.*

APPLICATION

Full proposals must be completed via an [online application platform](#), through which the following documents must be submitted:

- **Document 1 - Application form:** Research project description must be detailed in the [designated application form](#), which includes the following sections:
 1. Context
 2. Objectives
 3. Methodology
 4. Alignment of Objectives with the R1 Program
 5. Team Description and Justification for Sponsorship
 6. Budget Justification

- 7. Anticipated Outcomes
- 8. Timeline
- 9. EDI considerations
- **Document 2:** CV of the Principal Investigator

Applications may be submitted in French or English.

Applications must be submitted by October 9, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.

EVALUATION

Applications will be evaluated by an R1 internal committee based on the following criteria:

- Complementarity and alignment with R1's research program.
- Scientific quality
- Feasibility of the project within the allotted timeframe

Once the evaluation process is complete, applicants will receive an email containing the outcome of their application and a summary of the evaluation.

COMMITMENTS

Grant recipients agree to:

- Submit a financial report at the end of the funding period.
- Submit a project report within 30 days of the end of the funding period, summarizing the results and achievements.
- Ensure that all research activities comply with applicable ethical standards and requirements. Where applicable, proof of approval from a Research Ethics Board (REB) (or any other required ethical approval) must be provided before funds are released.
- Comply with the [Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications](#) (CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC).
- Follow the [ICMJE's recommendations](#) regarding the conduct, writing, review, and publication of scientific work in medical journals to ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability.
- Make any product, model, or dataset resulting from this funding available as open access, in accordance with the principles of open science.

CONTACT

If you have any questions regarding this call for participation, please contact Audrée Janelle-Montcalm, Research Support Advisor for the AI and Neuroscience Cluster, by email: audree.janelle.montcalm@umontreal.ca.

ANNEXE 1- R1 members who can act as sponsors

Name	Institution
Bakhtiari, Shahab	Université de Montréal
Bellec, Lune	Université de Montréal
Bengio, Yoshua	Université de Montréal
Bzdok, Danilo	Université McGill
Cisek, Paul	Université de Montréal
Côté, Sylvana	Université de Montréal
Desrosiers, Patrick	Université Laval
Duclos, Catherine	Université de Montréal
Dumas, Guillaume	Université de Montréal
Jerbi, Karim	Université de Montréal
Lajoie, Guillaume	Université de Montréal
Lavoie-Cardinal, Flavie	Université Laval
Lewis, Jason E.	Université Concordia
Lippé, Sarah	Université de Montréal
Luca, Ruxandra Monica	HEC
Ménard, Caroline	Université Laval
Muller, Eilif	Université de Montréal
Perich, Matthew	Université de Montréal
Peyrache, Adrien	Université McGill
Precup, Doina	Université McGill
Richards, Blake	Université McGill
Rish, Irina	Université de Montréal